

Spotlight

Mayor's Office
for Senior Citizens

A publication
of Seattle's
Human Services
Department

WINTER 2005

Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens — 30 years old and still going strong

by Mayor Greg Nickels

Thirty years ago, Mayor Wes Uhlman had the foresight to create the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens. I wonder if he realized then what a powerful force "seniors" would become.

For one thing, people over age 55 are more likely to vote. And with members of the baby boomer generation enjoying longer life spans because of better quality of life, a full 20 percent of Seattle's population is 55 or older. Our world is changing to accommodate an older population that is more active and thriving than their parents were at the same age.

It's time to celebrate our "seniorhood" and it's time to celebrate 30 years of service of the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens.

Located in our Human Services Department, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens supports healthy aging, independent living, and social and civic engagement — for all people, regardless of age, but particularly for older people who need extra support.

Healthy aging

For 30 years, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens has served as the front door to a wide range of services related to aging. While



Mayor Nickels mingles with seniors at the Senior Holiday Ball.

Congress tries to develop sustainable pension and health care systems, local government takes care of the immediate needs of older members of our society.

Senior Information and Assistance offers the professional services of senior advocates at no charge. Every year, thousands of elders, or their family members or friends, from all walks of life, take advantage of this free service.

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Advocates help clients determine housing or transportation options, prescription discounts, home care options, and other ways to live more comfortably.

Sometimes our senior advocates refer clients to case managers in the Aging and Disability Services division of our Human Services Department; other times to outside agencies. Senior Information and Assistance supports healthy aging for elders in every way and contributes to building healthy communities throughout Seattle.

Independent living

The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens supports independent living by helping mature workers find jobs and by reducing expenses for income-eligible seniors and families of all ages.

The Age 55+ Employment Resource Center can help you find a job. Our specialists — all older workers themselves — provide peer counseling and referrals for training and employment opportunities. A record number of older job seekers have contacted the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens this year, and nearly 500 have gone to work. This work directly supports one of my top priorities as mayor — to create jobs and economic opportunity for all.

The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens houses the City's Utility Assistance Program, which provides Seattle City Light and Seattle Public Utilities rate discounts for qualifying individuals and families, regardless of age. Each year, the program offers one-time emergency payment assistance for hundreds of households facing electrical disconnection.

Social and civic engagement

In addition to employment services that help keep people active and socially connected, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens offers volunteer programs to encourage social and civic engagement.

People of all ages take advantage of our volunteer programs. The office matches older volunteers with community projects that

interest them and matches younger people and corporate teams with projects supporting seniors. Intergenerational programs sponsored by the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens bring new life to the classroom and the elders who volunteer there.

If you want to learn new computer skills, our Seniors Training Seniors in Computer Basics classes may be just what you are looking for. You will learn the basics and more — computer programs used in the workplace, photo editing for invitations and family trees, e-mail and Internet skills to help seniors stay in touch with family and friends around the world. Mature computer-savvy volunteers teach small classes (six students) in computer centers throughout Seattle.

The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens sponsors events throughout the year, often in partnership with Seattle Parks and Recreation's senior adult program. You can dance at the Senior Holiday Ball at Seattle Center, enjoy Senior Day at the Seattle Aquarium and the Bank of America Tower, join thousands of your peers for a picnic at the Woodland Park Zoo, and more.

Special event information is listed in this newsletter, published three times a year. Please call the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens at (206) 684-0500 to request a free subscription, or for information about any of our program offerings.

I congratulate Wes Uhlman on his vision in creating the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens 30 years ago. It continues to be a welcoming environment and an important resource for improving the quality of life for our seniors in Seattle. Congratulations on 30 years of valuable service. Keep up the good work.

Welcome to the *new* Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens

by Irene Stewart, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens

On October 24, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens opened its doors in a new building. We moved out of the Alaska Building and into the Central Building, on Third Avenue between Columbia and Marion Streets. Our third floor office is open for business from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens is part of the Aging and Disability Services (ADS) division of Seattle Human Services Department (HSD). Next year, the Human Services Department and most of ADS will move to the Seattle Municipal Tower (formerly Key Tower) at Fifth & Cherry, two blocks up the hill.

NEW ADDRESS

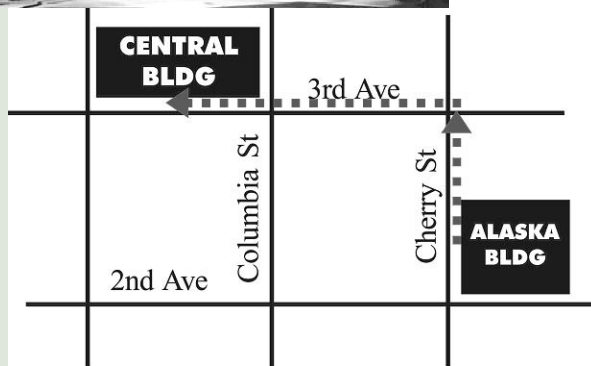
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The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens provides direct services to seniors and persons with disabilities as well as low-income utility customers. Rather than ask clients to climb the hill from the bus lines on Third Avenue, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens was able to get space conveniently located between bus stops.

Several other HSD units that provide direct services are co-located with the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens. Help for Working Families, Child Care Assistance, Seattle Youth Employment Program and Upward Bound are located on the third and fourth floors of the Central Building. The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens works closely with Help for Working Families and the Child Care Assistance program.

We love our new office, and we think you will too. Feel free to drop by the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens at your convenience. For Metro route and schedule information, call (206) 553-3000.

The new Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens is two blocks from the old office.

New emergency assistance to benefit utility customers in need

by Brenda Sevilla, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens



The Emergency Water Assistance Program helped Sonny B. stay in his home.



The Emergency Water Assistance Program is a great help to Wendy M.

Household Size (monthly)	125 % Federal Poverty Level
1	\$ 998
2	\$1,338
3	\$1,676
4	\$2,016
5	\$2,356
6	\$2,695
7	\$3,035
8	\$3,375

Soaring costs on just about everything makes it difficult for many people to pay their monthly bills. Too often, low-income seniors, adults with disabilities and others have to choose between purchasing medications, putting food on the table and paying utility bills.

For many years, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens in the Human Services Department has provided utility assistance programs, including rate discounts for eligible Seattle City Light and Seattle Public Utilities customers, and Project Share, emergency payment assistance to prevent electrical disconnection.

Now low-income Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) customers with immediate water service shut-off notices may qualify for a one-time \$200 reduction on their utility bill through the Emergency Water Assistance Program.

"We've needed this program for a long time," said David Broom, Utility Assistance Program supervisor. "This emergency assistance will help customers get current on their water bill. And once their balance is under control, we have other programs that can help them stay current on their utility bills."

Utility Assistance Program representatives at the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens talk with many utility customers who need financial assistance. They hear about customers' problems and know the sacrifices they make in order to meet basic needs.


"This program was a tremendous help to me," said Sonny B., an Emergency Water Assistance Program recipient. "Sometimes, residents need to find another place to stay if their water is shut off for a lengthy period. This program helped me stay in my home."

Another Emergency Water Assistance Program recipient shared her experience. "I am pretty much on a fixed income," said Wendy M. "For people who are ill like me, this is a godsend and a vital program to the Seattle community."

The Emergency Water Assistance Program emerged from an interagency study commissioned by the Seattle Human Services Department, Seattle Public Utilities and Seattle City Light. The study took a broad look at existing utility assistance programs and then focused on reducing redundancy, adding consistency and gaining efficiency. At the direction of Mayor Greg Nickels and the City Council, Seattle Public Utilities implemented an emergency assistance pilot program on July 18, 2005. Based on its success, it is possible the program may continue.

To qualify, Seattle Public Utilities residential clients must live within the Seattle city limits and must be at or below 125% Federal Poverty Level (see table). For more information, call Seattle Public Utilities at (206) 684-5800.

Happy 30th Anniversary, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens!



"The staff in the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens represents the City of Seattle, the Mayor and the Seattle Human Services Department every day. You have an exceptionally important job. No matter what the question, you have an answer. As we all get older, we are comforted to know that this one-stop resource is here. We are confident that 30 years from now, your successors will continue to do an equally stellar job with helping aging baby boomers. Thank you — and congratulations — to each and every one of you."

Patricia McInturff, Director
Seattle Human Services Department

Congratulations to all the staff and volunteers of the MOSC on this momentous occasion. Many things changed over the past 30 years except your continued dedication to excellence in serving the Seattle Community. We appreciate your hard work.

Selina Chow, Operations Manager
Aging and Disability Services,
Human Services Department

"Since 1975, when the City began providing assistance and support to low-income elderly residents, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens has helped customers with energy and bill payment assistance. Seattle City Light values this partnership to help customers use electricity wisely. Together, we will continue to give our customers timely, accurate, and affordable electric bills. Congratulations on 30 years of partnership and service to seniors in our community!"

Jorge Carrasco, Superintendent
Seattle City Light

Happy 30th Anniversary,

"I congratulate MOSC celebrating 30 years of improving the quality of life for all of the city's residents through the services it provides to Seattle's senior citizens. I wish you continued success in the coming years."

Ernest B. Johnson
Former Director, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens

"Congratulations to the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens on your 30th Anniversary. I am proud to have established this office under my administration. Your staff is to be commended on their excellent work and for their many accomplishments in the community. You have played an important role in making Seattle a great place for seniors to live!"

Wes Uhlman
Former Mayor, City of Seattle

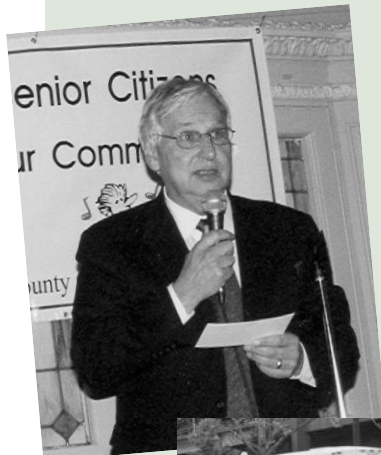
"For the past three decades, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens has served as an important resource for our region's older residents. With a commitment to providing a variety of programs and services to senior citizens and people with disabilities, the office is enhancing the quality of life for hundreds of people. I commend the staff for their professionalism and dedication. Congratulations again on this milestone in the office's history. Best wishes for continuing success in the years ahead."

Ron Sims
King County Executive

"Seattle is blessed to have this valuable office. Congratulations to your staff on their outstanding work and their many contributions in the community. You



Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens!



have done us proud. We look forward to another 30 years."

Paul Schell
Former Mayor, City of Seattle

"Congratulations to the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens for their stellar work. There is no other agency that I know of that pays such attention to our seniors. The variety and array of programs makes many older adults feel like an integral part of our community. It is a tribute to the individuals who use our services and the individuals who gives these services to our citizens. I wish you the very best!"

Norman B. Rice
Former Mayor, City of Seattle

"Thirty candles on the birthday cake, thirty years of outstanding service to the community! On this noteworthy anniversary, Seattle Public Utilities offers our best wishes for a long and successful life to our partner, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens. Many happy returns on the day!"

Chuck Clarke, Director
Seattle Public Utilities

"Congratulations to the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens for your 30th Anniversary, which serves to remind us of your important contribution to maintaining the quality of life for Seattle's seniors."

Nick Licata
Seattle City Councilmember

"Three decades of experience brings significant wisdom, insight and savvy to the mission of making Seattle a great place to grow old! HSD's Aging and Disability Services congratulates our Mayor's Office for Senior

Citizens on reaching ‘mid-life’ on this important journey.”

Pamela Piering, Director,
Aging and Disability Services,
Seattle Human Services Dept

“Congratulations to the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens for 30 years of great work. I don’t know anyone who isn’t getting older. We need you!”

Tom Rasmussen
Seattle City Councilmember

“The Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens, established under former Mayor Wes Uhlman, has successfully served seniors since the 1970’s. ‘MOSC,’ as the office is fondly known, has given a helping hand to many, many older people. Keep up the good work for another 30 years!”

Denise Klein, Executive Director
Senior Services of Seattle/King County

“Congratulations to MOSC staff and volunteers for 30 years of excellent service to the people of Seattle and King County. I always look forward to working with you all.”

Frederick Yee, MS, MBA
Regional Minority Health Coordinator, Region X

“It is my privilege to extend congratulations to the MOSC. I have been there with you. As far as the work — I have done that also. I share the greatest honor of working in the office where the staff are committed to give the milk of kindness and understanding to their clients. Seattle is lucky to have you! God bless!”

Dorothy Hollingsworth, civic leader,
Former Interim Director,
Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens

Happy 30th Anniversary, Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens!



A positive attitude wins the job

by Zimya A. Toms-Trend, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens

Gary Korpa didn't have much when he visited Vancouver, BC seven months ago, but after he was robbed and mugged during his short stay, he had nothing.

An American citizen without passport, identification, money or luggage, Canadian immigrant officials escorted Gary to the Blaine border and released him to US Customs. US officials gave Gary a bus ticket to Seattle. He arrived at night, and walked the streets until morning. After a few nights at the Downtown Emergency Service Center, Gary moved into the St. Martin de Porres night shelter where he breathed his first sigh of relief.

Since emergency shelters close early in the morning and don't re-open until early evening, Gary breakfasted at the Lazarus Center. After his second night at St. Martin's, he went to the Pike Market Senior Center to garner a membership card for the free lunch program. When asked to state his occupation, Gary replied that he had been an executive chef and managed a restaurant for 17 years. He then signed on as a kitchen volunteer.

Gary's competency didn't go unnoticed by Pike Market Senior Center director Bruce Wood. Bruce referred Gary to the Age 55+ Employment Resource Center in the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, where he completed Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) eligibility paperwork. Bruce then selected Gary for a Title V-subsidized receptionist position at the center. Gary is cross-training in several program areas. As this newsletter goes to press, the Senior Center is considering Gary for permanent hire. For Gary, unemployed and homeless, it was an unexpected surprise.

Title V SCSEP provides on-the-job training for people who are unemployed and low-income, whose employment prospects are dim. Typically, job seekers register at the Age 55+ Employment Resource Center, located in the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, where they have the support of a job counselor and a variety of employment services. Job counselors refer SCSEP-eligible candidates to host agencies like the Pike Market Senior Center. Gary was not only in the right place at the right time and extremely qualified for the position, he had provided a helping hand to serve other members and clients. "I've never had a client jump through the hoops so quickly after such hard luck," said Barrie Jackson, Gary's job counselor. "In one day, he filled out the registration forms in my office, then went to WorkSource and obtained free email, voicemail, a membership card and a wage statement, all in one fell swoop. That's totally incredible!"

"I immediately felt right at home here so, naturally, I volunteered," retorted Gary. "They needed the help. I had the expertise. Now, I feel valued and respected. It's a mutual admiration society. End of story!"

For more information about the Age 55+ Employment Resource Center, call the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens at (206) 684-0500 or go to www.seattle.gov/humanservices/mosc/ on the Web.



Gary's future looks brighter now that he's working at the Pike Market Senior Center.

Share your stories with students through Intergenerational Dialogues

by Jen Murdock, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens

Seniors who share their experiences with children and youth through Intergenerational Dialogues inspire students to realize their potential and realize some benefits for themselves while they're at it.

Through classroom presentations, performances, assemblies, and small group conversations, Intergenerational Dialogues helps Seattle students and elders:

- Gain a better understanding of other generations through oral histories, interviews, and activities outside of the classroom.
- Gain new appreciation of the aging process and develop meaningful relationships.
- Dissolve myths about age, race, culture, disability and other stereotypes.
- Honor the values, wisdom, and perspectives of other generations.
- Promote intergenerational learning, respect, caring and cooperation in our community.



Seniors share their stories with students through Intergenerational Dialogues.

Intergenerational Dialogues is a partnership between the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens and Intergenerational Innovations, a local nonprofit organization. While the program previously emphasized primary grades, in 2005–2006 it will also serve secondary schools. We are looking for senior volunteers who are eager to share their skills, life experiences and knowledge with students.

Participants engage in Intergenerational Dialogues for multiple reasons. Perry Dolan participates to give back to his community, inspiring youth to keep active through his story of competitive swimming. Eva Cummins describes her participation as a "continuous delight." By sharing her experience as a Holocaust survivor, Eva helps students discuss issues that are as relevant today as they were 50 years ago.

Every person has a story or experience to share. You can help support the children and youth in your community by helping them envision where their education could lead. The benefits of spending time with students are innumerable; however, most Intergenerational Dialogues volunteers report that they feel energized by this new experience.

Make the most of your experiences, past and present, and enrich the lives of students, one discussion at a time. To participate, contact Intergenerational Dialogues coordinator Jen Murdock at (206) 386-1023 or at jen.murdock@seattle.gov.

Help in the time of need

by John Deagen, Senior Services of Seattle/King County



John assists a caller with her concerns.

It all started when Joe contacted the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens on behalf of his older friend, Bob. (Joe and Bob are fictitious names.) Bob was unable to come to the office for help because he could not walk for long periods. For many days previously, Joe had tried to get help for Bob's health problems, to no avail. In fact, Joe and Bob were both homeless in Seattle, and had sought assistance at a number of places.

"The contradictory information and referrals we received from other organizations only frustrated and angered us," said Joe. "We were in a crisis — Bob needed medical attention and we were homeless."

A senior advocate in the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens' Senior Information and Assistance program assisted Joe right away.

The senior advocate suggested that a case manager could provide the best help for Bob. The case manager would help Bob find housing, medical care, and transportation services. Once housed, Bob would also receive assistance applying for a utility rate discount, also through the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens. This information lifted Joe's spirits and prompted him to call Bob for permission to get a case manager referral. Bob agreed to the help.

Within days, Aging and Disability Services assigned a case manager to Bob. A few days later, Joe became ill and underwent surgery. He could no longer help Bob. Then Bob, diagnosed with a bleeding ulcer, was given a prescription he could not afford to fill.

Once the senior advocate learned about the prescription Bob needed, he alerted Bob's case manager and Bob received assistance with his medications for the bleeding ulcer. The case manager also helped Bob fill out the application for an apartment at a low-income HUD building.

Bob is now housed and working with the case manager to get furniture and ongoing medical care. He is registered with the Utility Assistance Program. Joe is recovering nicely from his surgery.

The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens has partnered with Senior Services of Seattle/King County to provide Senior Information and Assistance for the past 30 years.

"My hope is that we will continue this partnership for another 30 years," said Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens director Irene Stewart. "Senior Information and Assistance supports healthy aging, independent living and social and civic engagement — our mission — in every way."

To speak with a senior advocate, call (206) 684-0500 or go to www.seattle.gov/humanservices/mosc/ on the Web.

Special Events

Senior Holiday Ball • Monday, December 5, 2005

Seniors from throughout Seattle and King County are invited to enjoy the sounds of the Seattle Swing Band. Admission is free, but food bank donations are welcome.

Time: 1–4 p.m.

Place: Seattle Center House, 305 Harrison St

Info: Call (206) 684-0500

Senior Adults Programs

Programs for active seniors 55 and better

Seattle Parks and Recreation offers a quarterly listing of special outings and events for people age 55 and above living in Seattle. To receive your copy, please call Senior Adult Programs, Seattle Parks and Recreation, at (206) 684-4951 (Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-3 p.m.) or go to www.seattle.gov/parks/Seniors/index.htm on the Web.

Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens

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Read the latest edition of **Spotlight**, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens' newsletter. In this issue:

Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens—30 years old and still going strong SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Also...

- We've moved! Visit our new office in the Central Building
- New Emergency Water Assistance Program benefits utility customers in need
- A positive attitude wins the job
- Share your stories with students through Intergenerational Dialogues
- Senior I&A: Help in the time of need

Spotlight

is published three times a year by the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens.

The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, part of Seattle/King County Aging and Disability Services and the Seattle Human Services Department, complies with all federal, state, and local laws prohibiting discrimination.

Accommodations for persons with disabilities will be provided upon request.

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